

**AN INTERESTING LOCAL FORM AND NEW LARVAL  
HOSTPLANT OF *HYPOCHRYSOPS BYZOS* (BOISDUVAL)  
(LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE)**

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**Abstract**

Mt Warning in northern New South Wales is recorded as a new locality for *Hypochrysops byzos byzos* (Boisduval) and a new larval hostplant, *Astrotricha longifolia* Benth. (Araliaceae) is identified.

**Introduction**

*Hypochrysops byzos* (Boisduval) occurs in south-eastern Australia from central Victoria to the A.C.T., north through New South Wales to Armidale and at Stanthorpe and "Cunnamulla" in Queensland (Common and Waterhouse 1981). More recently it has been found at Mt Moffatt in Central Queensland (Monteith and Yeates 1988). The larva of this species has been recorded feeding only on various species of *Pomaderris* (Rhamnaceae). Two subspecies are recognised; *H. byzos hecalius* Miskin from Victoria north to the A.C.T. and *H. byzos byzos* (Boisduval) in the northern part of the range.

**Observations**

During a hike to the summit of Mt Warning in late January 1988, females of the cryptic lycaenid *Hypochrysops byzos* were observed resting on and flying around an unidentified plant. On examining the under surface of the leaves a number of small larvae were discovered and recognised as being those of *H. byzos*. Subsequent visits to the same locality were made to obtain early stages of the lycaenid and plant material for identification. From this material a series of adults was bred which showed consistent differences from the nominate race.

*H. byzos* females from Mt Warning consistently lack the central yellow patch on the hindwing upperside, giving them a darker appearance than the nominate race, whilst the male ground colour beneath is greyer than specimens from Sydney. Mt Warning specimens were also compared with a series from Glen Aplin, near Stanthorpe, in the University of Queensland Insect Collection and in private collections. Glen Aplin specimens were found to be very variable. However, *H. byzos* males from Glen Aplin were almost indistinguishable from those of Mt Warning, while some of the females from Glen Aplin have a reduced spot on the hindwing upperside, approaching the form from Mt Warning (see also Sands 1986). Two female specimens from Mt Moffatt, in the Queensland Museum, were also examined and found to have hindwing spots consistent with specimens from Sydney. It would seem that the population of *H. byzos* from Mt Warning represents a clinal extreme (Fig. 1).

The hostplant was identified at the Queensland Herbarium as *Astrotricha longifolia* Benth. (Araliaceae), which grows into a short spreading tree on the upper slopes of Mt Warning, often in rather inaccessible positions. This plant family has not been recorded previously as a host for *H. byzos*. *A. longifolia* is locally abundant in the Mt Warning National Park and since the butterfly is also known from nearby Mt Chincogan (L. Matthews, pers. comm.) it would seem that the population is secure.



**Fig. 1.** *Hypochrysops byzos byzos* female from Mt Warning, NSW.

### Acknowledgments

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### References

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